

Courts and Grounds Report

Continued with GreenThumb quarterly treatments of Court 1.

For Court 2. we treated the court area with a Weed and Feed compound which had minimal impact on the larger weeds which we also then treated directly.

Given the usage and cost of the GreenThumb treatments I would suggest we continue with this approach.

We had a good response last to our call for people to join the Mowing Rota and hopefully all those who signed up last year will do so again this year. I sent out a notice to that effect earlier and as soon as numbers and availability are confirmed I will issue a rota.

The tools bought early last year were well used and I have bought some replacement parts out of club funds to keep them functioning.

Having taken the large grasses back to their roots after the cold damage of the 22/23 winter we continued to monitor them and earlier this year I laid weed suppressing material down along that side of court 1. and covered it with wood chippings. Thanks to Richard and Annie for their generous contribution of a lorry load of chippings and to Richard for help in moving onto courts.

A lorry load of chippings is quite a lot and there was sufficient surplus to allow us to do the same on the opposite side of court 2. (opposite Nos. 22 - 24) so we have dug up the various scruffy plants and brambles threatening to take over that side of the court laid more weed suppressant/sprayed and laid another cubic metre of chippings. To my mind this is a significant aesthetic improvement but more importantly it will reduce the number of balls lost in the undergrowth and make it a lot easier to maintain.

We also cut back the ivy that has grown up the posts holding the perimeter fence and will extend that program to address the entire courts. Again this will make it easier to maintain the environment once we have it back under control.

I have some plants ready to go in but will restrict these to slow growing low height.

We are planning on holding a gardening morning within the next month and the Ivy removal will be a focus - as will reducing the height of the perimeter plants to a more manageable level. This will look a bit brutal for a while but is necessary given the fact that we do not have a full time gardener and the crowd effort once or twice a year is insufficient once

The hedge along the side of Edwy PARade had to be rooted up due to Box Moth and we have begun the process of replacing with a variety of hardier plants which will reflect the hedge opposite the far end of the courts. Some more of these will go in over the next month.

It may be necessary to service one of the mowers again and I will keep an eye on it. As we did last year i suggest we allow the grass on either side of the courts to grow throughout April and May and begin cutting back in June. This is in keeping with suggested environmental best practice for managed lawns.

I have contacted the local mower shop and will hire a scarifier as soon as we get some clear weather. Cost > £50.